

10/29/96

Dear Hal,

Came across these
references to your work.
I had no idea you
were involved in The
Hammak Aromalt Controversy.
I thought Phillips took
a cheap shot by saying
you "were snatching anal
smoking".

Rather the time
Lawrence Schiller took
in "The Scavengers and"
critics of The Wagon Report.
See enclosed article for
more on Schiller.

I note Schiller is
now involved with
Robert Kavalashian the
binal of "Best Friend"
and lawyer one really
needs! Ha Ha. Your
old friend Donald Freed

Wrote a terrible book
on The O.J. Case, "Killing
Time". All speculation and
rumors. Fused has not
changed.

That time, What's
wrong with the old evidence
is true. That is your work.
The government couldn't
answer the so called
"old" questions in 1965. And
it can't today.

The questions you
were asked in 1966 about
why is so much classified
remains true today years
later!

Why you were never
accorded the recognition
you deserved is a media
disgrace. But it wasn't
personal.

Look at Lawrenstein. He
was ridiculed as crazy
for raising the issue.
Only the people wanted
the truth. Every other
interest group - right, left,
center was against the
truth.

You're an American
Zoo.

Best Wishes,

EO

A PARTISAN VIEW BY
WILLIAM PHILLIPS, STEIN AND
DAY, 1983. A Charmed Circle

It began in 1963
el called me one
Review. He said
th what Hannah
I said we did not
o. He said yes, of
it turned out to be
The gist of Abel's
aborating in their
lle rung of fascist
their crimes to the

intellectual differ-
ending, perhaps a
it seemed to me
at that people like
ie world, are little,
their behavior has
arbaric acts. I also
nce to the Nazis by
case, the issue was
ways a put-down,
ertainly fell into the
personal considera-
situations like this,
is to look for some
ndship, intellectual
leal of fairness, and
g that it had never
oreseeing the mess

y it and clearly felt it
ld's opinion and he,
me for Dwight had
gh I should add that
admirer of Lionel. I
ed and less strident.
e from Philip Rahv,

who was still an editor of the magazine though not very active. Rahv did not like Arendt or what he called her conservatism and anti-Jewish bias. And he had on his side, as did Abel, the fact that respectable editorial practice dictated the printing of a commissioned piece unless it was libelous, or personally offensive, or intellectually below the level, or generally beyond the pale.

Admittedly, we were in the middle of a dilemma that had no clear resolution, certainly not to everyone's satisfaction. What was finally done—which was my decision—was to run Abel's piece and then open up the question in a wider discussion. In the next issue Daniel Bell tried to act as a peacemaker by judiciously weighing Abel's arguments against Arendt's thesis and lifting the whole issue to the contradiction between the ideals of justice and humanity and the more immediate questions of guilt and retribution involving the Jewish people.

In the following issue, we published comments by Mary McCarthy, Dwight Macdonald, Marie Syrkin, Irving Howe, Robert Lowell, Harold Weisberg, and myself, with a reply by Abel to his critics. Most of the comments, as I said in my piece, which was cast in the form of a letter to Mary McCarthy who had expressed some doubt about whether I would take a position on the controversy, were clever, some brilliant, but they were too polemical, too busy tripping each other up, to add much to the argument. Syrkin and Weisberg were snarling and sneering, Lowell Olympian and touching in his affection for Hannah, McCarthy brilliant, especially in the writing, and honest in stating her bias, though her division of the protagonists into Jewish and Gentile only fueled the polarization, and Macdonald journalistically sharp and agile, but going along with Mary's arguments. In my piece, I tried to be fair and judicious, but that is a thankless job, especially when extreme positions are fashionable, and it makes one look as though he is avoiding taking a strong stand. (Elizabeth Young-Bruehl's account of this incident in her biography of Arendt is neither full nor correct.)

The only tangible result of the whole controversy was that Hannah and I did not speak to each other for a few years. Hannah felt betrayed by me. And though I tried to explain that my conduct was the only proper one for an editor of a magazine that prided itself on being open to any serious view, and that you could not just kill things